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ABSTRACT

This guide, which is designed for women interested in learning about successful fair pay initiatives and ways of achieving fair pay, profiles organizations offering information about fair pay and summarizes selected achievements of women employed by state, county, and city governments and private employers. Presented first is background information about the Fair Pay Clearinghouse, which was created by the U.S. Department of Labor's Women's Bureau to help employed women access information about successful strategies for achieving pay equity. Next, unions, coalitions, and job evaluation studies are discussed as possible first steps toward achieving fair pay. In the remainder of the guide, the possible outcomes of those strategies are illustrated through profiles of fair pay initiatives and their effects in the following locations: Minnesota state government; Connecticut state government; Yale University; the government of Maryland's Montgomery County; the Los Angeles city and county governments; and Santa Clara County, California. Concluding the guide are the addresses of the 10 regional offices of the Women's Bureau. (MN)

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ED 402 427

# Worth More than We Earn: Fair Pay for Working Women
# What Works: Fair Pay for Working Women

Women's Bureau
U.S. Department of Labor

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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# Worth More Than We Earn: Fair Pay for Working Women

## Working Women Talk About Their Pay

In 1994, the Women's Bureau launched *Working Women Count!*, a major national survey to ask working women about their jobs -- what they like, what they do not like, and what they want to change. Over a quarter of a million women told us what it means to be a working woman in America today.

"Improving pay scales" was a top priority for change. Nearly sixty percent of American women working year-round and full-time get paid less than $25,000 per year. Over half of all women work in traditionally female jobs, like clerical worker, nurse, child care worker, cook, cleaner, and librarian, most of which are relatively low-paying. Women of color are crowded into some of the very lowest paying of these jobs. Few women think their wages reflect the real value of their work.

Working women told us they want their true value in the work place reflected -- in their paychecks. And pay that doesn't fairly reflect the value of women's contributions hurts whole families -- men, women, and children.

To provide easily accessible information on how to get fair pay where you work, the Women's Bureau has created the **Fair Pay Clearinghouse**. Call us on our toll-free number to find out more about women's pay, how employers have changed their pay practices, and who's working to get better wages for "women's work."

## Has Any of These Things Ever Happened to You?

- When you applied for work, you were "steered" out of better paying jobs because the employer assumed you wanted only "women's work."
- Your "women's job" is paid lower than "men's jobs" that require the same amount of skill, effort, and responsibility in the same company.
- You are a child care provider for county government and you get paid less than liquor store clerks who also work for the county. You think your job requires equal or more skill, effort, and responsibility than selling liquor.
- You work in a professional position and have a Master's degree and still don't get paid a salary you can support your children on. You've worked hard for your education, paid a lot of money for it, and think you're doing a very important job -- but that's not what your salary says!
- As a food service worker in a high school, you make much less per hour than the maintenance staff (who are almost all men). Your state never followed up on its job evaluation studies it made years ago. You feel frustrated (and underpaid!) and don't know where to turn for help.
- You are a data entry operator getting paid $8,000 less per year than general laborers, who are mostly men. You think your jobs have comparable levels of skill and responsibilities.
- You're a man who works in a "women's" service job, and you think you're paid less than the men who work in "men's" service jobs and have less responsibility than you do.

Women and their organizations, including labor unions, have mounted campaigns to raise wages to levels that reflect the value of "women's work." Women working together have made great progress in reducing the wage gap between women and men.

## What is the Wage Gap?

o Many people used to agree with employers' paying men more than women for the same work, because men had families to support. Times have changed, and now women have families to support, too, either on their own or along with men. Married women, particularly if they have children, are more likely to be employed than at home. Single women, with or without children, also deserve a fair wage.

o In 1994 women working full-time and year-round averaged 72 cents for each dollar that men earned.

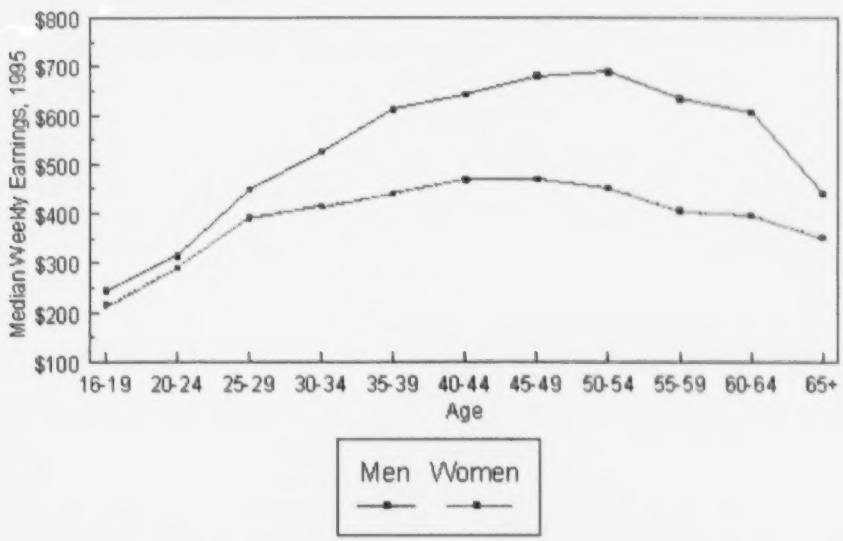
o African-American women earned only 63 percent and Hispanic women only 57 percent of white men's weekly earnings.

o Women represented by unions earned weekly wages that were 35 percent higher than women in unorganized workplaces. Also, union women earned weekly wages *greater* than those of *men* who were not represented by unions.

o Women and people of color, on average, earned less than white men with the same educational backgrounds; often, white men with less education earned as much as better educated women and people of color. For example, the average college educated Hispanic woman earned only $21 per week more than white male *high school* graduates.

o Over a woman's lifetime, unequal pay hurts a lot. It directly affects how much -- or how little -- her pension and Social Security payments will be. Getting old too often means becoming poor -- for too many women and people of color.

## The Wage Gap Widens During Most of Women's Working Years



**Source: Unpublished tabulations, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey**

## Can the Law Help?

Unequal pay because of sex and race has a long history. For generations, it was legal to pay women and people of color just a fraction of what majority-group men were paid for the same job.

Federal, State, and local laws require equal pay for equal work for the same employer, but today most women work in jobs that are different from those that men do. Traditional "women's work" (education, food service, health care, to name a few kinds) has been undervalued in part because people thought of it as an extension of women's family and household responsibilities, and therefore not appearing to require any special or additional skills. Advocates are currently trying to change the law so that it covers jobs that may be different from men's jobs, but are still equal or equivalent.

## What is Fair Pay or Pay Equity?

Fair pay or pay equity eliminates sex and race discrimination in wage-setting practices. It means equal pay for work of equal value, even when that work is different. Fair pay corrects the historical practice of paying less for work performed by women. Women may perform jobs with different duties than the jobs performed by men, but if the "male" and "female" jobs are equally valuable to the organization they should be paid comparably.

## What Works

## o What Employers Can Do: Job Evaluation Studies

Increasingly, many employers realize that if they don't increase the pay for predominantly female jobs, they can no longer attract and retain a skilled work force. Many of the fastest growing jobs in the economy are predominantly female jobs, and increasing numbers of women are entering better-paid, non-traditional jobs. More employers understand the need to review their wage-setting practices to make sure they are paying equal wages for work that is of equal or equivalent value. Job evaluation studies are one of the most useful tools available to employers, employee associations, and unions.<1> This is what they do:

**o** Job evaluation is the process by which the value of jobs is determined. It is also the cornerstone of a good fair pay study.

**o** A job evaluation plan compares all positions within one establishment, despite job dissimilarity or level in the organization. It measures accurately several factors including the inherent skill, effort, responsibility, and working conditions of each job and measures these factors for each position in the organization. Combined with analysis of job descriptions and of pay practices, these studies can identify and fix wage practices that do not reward work of equal value with equal pay.

**o** Employers who have conducted studies and implemented fair pay policies within their establishments often find their system of evaluating employees improved. For example, accurate, up-to-date job descriptions can be used to develop and implement a performance appraisal system. These will also enable the organization to establish more accurate criteria for hiring and rewarding employees. Also, evaluating jobs and paying workers according to their value allows employers to attract, retain and motivate the most

competent work force, while keeping costs low enough to remain competitive.

o The Fair Pay Clearinghouse wants to include in its database employers who have made wage adjustments to one or more predominantly female occupations in order to eliminate sex and race discrimination in wage-setting practices. If you are such an employer or if you know about one, please contact the Clearinghouse.

## o What Unions Can Do: Negotiating Fair Pay

Hundreds of State, city, and county governments, community colleges, universities, and other employers (some private) across the United States have changed wage- setting practices for traditionally female jobs after studying the issue -- often pressed to do so by a union, a women's group, or elected officials. The right to form unions has been an important ingredient of most fair pay or pay equity adjustments.

Over the past twenty years, unions have increasingly opened their top ranks to full participation by women and people of color, making pay inequity a higher priority. Unions have played an important role in making workers' fair pay concerns more visible and in negotiating specific pay increases or job classification changes across the United States.

In two-thirds of the states that have made pay adjustments, more than half of all women workers received pay increases through these programs.<2> More progress toward fair pay has been made in the public sector than in the private sector, partly because the wages and job descriptions of government employees are public information. Job evaluation studies can easily fit civil service systems. Also, laws governing collective bargaining and civil service laws and practices often refer to the importance of fair and equitable pay. In addition, elected officials control whether or not money is designated to narrow any wage gap found. These officials often respond to constituents who press their concerns in an organized way.

## o What Working Women Can Do:

## The Women's Bureau Fair Pay Clearinghouse

The U.S. Department of Labor's Women's Bureau created the Fair Pay Clearinghouse to provide information to help working women and men, employers, and other organizations "improve pay scales." You can call, write, or visit the Women's Bureau website on the Internet to get:

o wage and occupation information on traditionally female jobs; how women of different races, ethnic origins, ages, and educational backgrounds are paid; how being represented by a union affects women's pay;

o resource organizations, including labor unions, associations in your occupation (like nurses or librarians), and business organizations in your state and nationwide that are active on fair pay issues; and

o information on pay adjustments made by employers across the country and whether or not there is a fair pay law in your state that covers you.

One working woman might be easily overwhelmed by trying to convince an employer to implement fair pay practices by herself. **You are not alone.**

Contacting the Fair Pay Clearinghouse will give you the right tools to know what the facts are, to know

your rights, and to learn what works from pioneering efforts by organizations committed to working women.

The Fair Pay Clearinghouse wants to include in its database resource organizations that work on the fair pay issue, including community organizations, business associations, labor unions, women's groups, and others. If you are such a resource organization or you know about one, please contact the Clearinghouse.

Contact the Women's Bureau Fair Pay Clearinghouse at 1-800-347-3741. Or visit us at our Internet website: http://www.dol.gov/dol/wb

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<1> "How Does Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value Affect Employers?" and "How Can You Identify and Eliminate Sex-Based Discrimination in Pay?" For copies of these and other publications, contact the Equal Pay Division, Labour Standards and Equal Pay, Labour Canada, Ottawa, Ontario K1A OJ2 (819) 997-2861

<2> "Pay Equity and the Wage Gap: Success in the States," Institute for Women's Policy Research, Washington, D.C., p. 5.

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# What Works: Fair Pay for Working Women

## Responding to Working Women: The Fair Pay Clearinghouse

In 1994, the Women's Bureau launched **Working Women Count!**, a major national survey to ask working women about their jobs -- what they like, what they do not like, and what they want to change. Over a quarter of a million women told us what it means to be a working woman in America today.

"Improving pay scales" is a top priority for change. Three out of four American working women, including full-time and part-time workers, get paid less than $25,000 per year. About half of all women work in traditionally female jobs, like clerical worker, nurse, child care worker, cook, cleaner, and librarian, most of which are relatively low-paying. Women of color are crowded into some of the very lowest paying of these jobs. Few women think their wages reflect the real value of their work. In response, the Women's Bureau created the **Fair Pay Clearinghouse** to help working women get the facts about what works to achieve fair pay or pay equity.

## Background to the Fair Pay Clearinghouse

For generations, it was legal to pay women and people of color a fraction of what majority-group men were paid for the same job. Today, many federal, state, and local laws require equal pay for equal work in the same job for the same employer, but many women still work in jobs that are different from those that men do, even though the work may still be of equal or equivalent value.

Fair pay or pay equity is an important solution to this problem. Fair pay or pay equity means equal pay for work of equal value, even when that work is different. Fair pay corrects the historical practice of paying less for work performed by women. Women may perform jobs with different duties than the jobs performed by men, but if the "male" and "female" jobs are equally valuable to the organization they should be paid comparably.

Women and their organizations, including labor unions, have campaigned to raise wages to more accurately reflect the value of "women's work." Women -- working together and with working men -- have made progress in reducing the wage gap between women and men.

To provide easily accessible information on how to get fair pay where you work, the Women's Bureau has created the **Fair Pay Clearinghouse**. Call us on our toll-free number. Find out more about women's pay, how employers have changed their pay practices, and who's working to get better wages for "women's work."

## What Works: Hundreds of Examples of Fair Pay Initiatives

Hundreds of state, city, and county governments, community colleges, universities and other employers (some private) across the United States have changed wage-setting practices for traditionally female jobs after studying the issue -- often pressed to do so by a union, a women's group, or elected officials. Unions have played an important role in making workers' fair pay concerns more visible and in negotiating specific

pay increases or job classification changes. In two-thirds of the states that have adjusted pay systems, more than half of all women workers received pay increases through these programs.<1>

More progress toward fair pay has been made in the public sector than in the private sector, partly because the wages and job descriptions of government employees are public information. Job evaluation studies that compare and measure actual job responsibilities can easily fit civil service systems. Also, laws governing collective bargaining and the civil service often refer to the importance of fair and equitable pay. In addition, elected officials control whether or not money is designated to narrow any wage gap found. These officials often respo... to constituents who press their concerns in an organized way.

## Women are Winning Fair Pay Across the United States

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**Only the blue shaded states indicate Fair Pay/Pay Equity for State Employees 1**

*The twenty states identified by the National Committee on Pay Equity are: California, Connecticut, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin. Of these, according to the Institute for Women's Policy Research, Hawaii, Pennsylvania, Florida, and South Dakota do not consider their adjustments to have been motivated by pay equity. In Maine, New Mexico, Oregon, and Vermont pay equity was only one motivation for reform.*

## FIRST STEPS TOWARD FAIR PAY

**o If you work for state, county, or city government, the stories below provide helpful hints of what to do and who can help you. Two out of five working women in the public sector are represented by a union -- three times the proportion of women who are unionized in the economy as a whole. If you are in this group, your union may be one place to start.**

**o If you work for a private sector employer, these profiles of fair pay successes may help point the**

**way generally, but you may want to focus on working with other people, both at work and in your community, to develop a workable plan. You may want to take a look at your own employer's workforce to highlight problem areas,<2> and you may want to persuade your employer to conduct a job evaluation study.**

**Job evaluation studies are often used in both the public and the private sector to compare all positions in a company and measure accurately factors including the inherent skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions of each job. The employer can then identify and fix wage practices that do not reward work of equal value with equal pay. The Fair Pay Clearinghouse can connect you to organizations that have engaged in these efforts.**

# HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The following summaries of working women's fair pay achievements with state, county, city government employers and with private employers offer useful guidance on the many roads toward fair pay. Millions of working women who do not yet have fair pay practices throughout the United States can build on the experiences of others in winning fair pay. Many of the organizations and employers mentioned below may be available for consultation and advice on the "how to's" of achieving fair pay. Contact the **Fair Pay Clearinghouse** for those in your state, region or occupation.

# WHAT WORKS - EMPLOYERS WHO HAVE IMPROVED THEIR PAY PRACTICES

**The State of Minnesota (all state, city, county and school district employees)**

For nearly two decades, Minnesota has led pay equity efforts in the nation. While pay equity initiatives have now been undertaken by hundreds of public and private employers across the country, Minnesota was the first to provide pay equity for state government employees and the first to require pay equity for local government and school district employees. A comprehensive educational and political campaign resulted in legislation requiring these changes to the pay of so many workers throughout Minnesota. The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), a labor union active in both the public and private sectors with a growing proportion of women members, played a critical role in creating this change in the pay structure of an entire state, county, and city government.

## Fair pay changes women's lives, and the lives of their families.

Karen Foreman, a clerk/typist and a single mother of two who was getting paid $8,600, saw her wages raised to $23,000.

"I depended on Medicaid, fuel assistance, school lunch tickets and free government commodities such as cheese, rice and dried milk.<3> Pay equity has lifted me from the level where I was constantly struggling. It has meant the difference from really being on the edge of poverty to being self-supporting.

Now I can decide what my family's going to eat, because I can afford to go to the store and buy it. I can make decisions about health care for my children, because now I'm covered by the state health plan. And I feel my work is respected, because my pay is on a level with what my male counterparts in other state jobs are paid.

Before the pay equity increases, the general maintenance workers were paid more than clerical staff, who were required to have more skills and training. We have less friction at work and our morale has really improved. But I never experienced a backlash over the six year period that pay equity was implemented, because my co-workers in maintenance were not penalized -- they continued getting raises.<4>

According to *Pay Equity: The Minnesota Experience*, a 1994 publication of the Legislative Commission on the Economic Status of Women in St. Paul, "Minnesota's experience shows that pay equity can be implemented smoothly and at a reasonable cost.<5> Minnesota's Pay Equity Coordinator makes available to all state and local governments computer software specifically designed to facilitate examination of pay practices, estimate underpayment of female job classes and calculate results for several different compliance measures.

Early pay equity studies in Minnesota and across the nation showed that "women's work" was consistently paid less than "men's work." When jobs of equal value were compared, there was an almost automatic discount for the jobs performed by women. This disparity could not be explained by qualifications for the job, by length of service in the job, by job performance, or by any factor other than gender. One study found, for example, that clerk stenographers - 99.7% of whom were women - had about as hard a job to do as laborers, all of whom were men. The clerk stenographers got $1,171 a month while the laborers got $1,521.

In Minnesota and in other places fair pay or pay equity has been implemented as result of state legislation. For example, the Minnesota legislature passed the State Government Pay Equity Act in 1982 and the Local Government Pay Equity Act in 1984. Most legislation establishes a pay equity policy and may also require a job evaluation study or other specific mechanisms to remedy unfair pay practices.

Most legislation addresses pay equity for state government employees. Advocates have focused on public employment for several reasons: data on wages are more readily available, and public employers are often expected to serve as models for the private sector.

Between 1982 and 1986, the State of Minnesota spent $26 million to upgrade women's pay. Some 8,500 state employees, mostly clerical and health care employees in 200 female- dominated classes and about a third of the state work force, received average raises of approximately $2,000 to $2,500.

## Women in Minnesota State Government Employment Today

During the 20 years that women have worked toward fair pay in Minnesota, women's pay as a percent of men's pay has increased substantially. In 1976, women earned 69 percent of what men earned on an hourly basis. In 1996, women's earnings were 86 percent of men's, a 17 percent increase. This pay gap is much smaller than the pay gap of American women working full-time year-round who average 72 cents for each dollar earned by men.

Continued under-representation of women in higher-paid jobs is one of the causes of the remaining wage gap. Affirmative action continues to increase women's representation in higher- paid jobs.

## The State of Connecticut

"I felt I was fighting a battle that my grandmother started -- it has taken *this long* to have pay equity with male-dominated jobs. I was a head nurse when I got involved in the pay equity project more than 16 years ago. Now I'm paid according to what I *do*, *not* according to who I *am*.

I feel I have succeeded. I hope my children and grandchildren will not have to be subjected to the pay differences I have been."

Cindy Mortrude, 49-year-old nurse supervisor

Connecticut Valley Hospital, Middletown, Connecticut

In 1979, a coalition of women legislative representatives, union leaders and women's groups organized to support passage of a bill calling for a pilot study to examine Connecticut's state government for any existing pay inequities. The study found that jobs held predominantly by women were paid between 17-20% less than those comparable jobs held predominantly by men. Eventually, every job class was surveyed and evaluated through a point factor system.

As a result of these studies, all female-dominated job classes received some pay increase and some other kinds of job classes also received adjustments. Approximately 42 million dollars has been paid in pay equity increases for 20,000 of the 50,000 state workers -- increases that average between $2,000 and $2,500.

In 1996, Connecticut state workers in traditionally female jobs and other jobs that have been underpaid are receiving their final round of pay equity adjustments.

Coalition members that fought for pay equity in Connecticut were Local 1199 (hospital workers) of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), the Connecticut State Federation of Teachers of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), the Connecticut State Employees Association, the Connecticut National Organization for Women (NOW), the Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund, the Connecticut Permanent Commission on the Status of Women, and the Women's Issues Network.

## Yale University (New Haven, Connecticut)

"At the time we went on strike, I had worked for Yale for four years and was earning $12,150. I had started in 1980 in a job that required a college degree, and I was a college grad.

By the end of our first union contract, I earned about $17,000. It wasn't just the money, although the raises provided financial security that translated into independence.

It was also a sense of empowerment to continue on in the future. The idea of spending a lifetime working hard at a job you enjoy and then retiring into poverty is not a good thing. Now, I can look forward to a retirement with dignity."

Laura Smith, 38 years old, editorial assistant and president of Local 34

Members of the Local 34 Federation of University Employees, of HERE (Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union), composed mostly of clerical and technical workers, went on strike against Yale University for ten weeks.

HERE argued that within the bargaining unit, Blacks and women were both paid less than whites and men doing comparable work, even though Blacks and women had, on average, greater seniority. HERE maintained that not only was there this kind of pay inequity among employees, but also that the bargaining

unit was underpaid *as a whole*, due to its primarily female composition.

In January 1985 a settlement was reached that provided average salary increases of 35 percent to be implemented over a three and a half year period for those workers. The union helped negotiate eliminating the lowest pay grade, which raised wages for about 2,600 secretaries, telephone operators, computer programmers, and clerical/technical workers. Virtually all these workers were female and a majority were Black.

According to Local 34, all clerical and technical employees earned an average of $18,000 by the end of the agreement, compared to a pre-contract average of $13,318. Today, the average salary for these workers is $26,000, with benefits and pensions.

## Montgomery County (Maryland)

"Pay equity was a big issue for librarians across the country in the early 1980's. Montgomery County incorporated this issue in a general reclassification study, that started the process of two reclassifications in 1985 and 1989.

The Montgomery County Government Commission for Women supported and lobbied for pay equity among the female-dominated job classes within county government. Both the Commission and the county executive wanted to make sure that credit was given for skills and knowledge factors that had not been paid attention to before.

The reclassifications brought us more in line salarywise with other employees with similar skills, education and background, etc. The changes ultimately affected many clerical classes, too. An opposition group, the Blue Ribbon Commission, opposed pay equity increases, so it was a fight. We had our doubts that it would ever happen.

Essentially, it was a long struggle, but it was worth the effort, because it brought the issue to the table and corrected some pay inequities. We were lucky to have the support of the Montgomery County Government Women's Commission."

Estelle Alexander, 55 years old, formerly president of Women for Equality (WE) and a librarian formerly with Montgomery County<6>

Montgomery County is one of only a handful of counties in the United States to have implemented a pay equity plan without litigation or state legislation, according to the National Committee on Pay Equity.<7> County workers, volunteer advocates from women's and labor organizations, county personnel, and job consultants worked together over a long period to create these gains for women and men working in female-dominated jobs. These efforts included a bill calling for pay equity being introduced at the County Council; holding hearings on the bill; forming a Council Compensation Task Force to examine compensation issues, including pay equity; and in 1984, creating the county pay equity coalition, an association of 20 women's professional, employee and community organizations committed to fairer pay practices.

In 1989, negotiations by the Montgomery County Government Employees Organization Local 400 (an affiliate of United Food and Commercial Workers International Union), the Montgomery County Council and other groups led to fair pay increases of 5% for nearly 3,000 County secretaries, bus drivers, school therapists, laborers, school health technicians, dental hygienists, librarians, nurses, data processors and others. These workers were predominantly women and people of color. Then in 1992 the school board

agreed to $484,000 in increases for school employees.<8>

## City of Los Angeles (California)

Librarians in Los Angeles started talking about the issue of pay equity in the 1960's. In 1968, the City commissioned a job evaluation study which found a clear disparity in points given to librarians as opposed to male-dominated professional jobs.

In the early 1980's, AFSCME Council 36 took up the issue in earnest.<9> Local 2626 (library workers) and Local 3090 (clerical workers) filed pay discrimination charges with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). The union based these charges both on the findings of the earlier study and on AFSCME staff's tabulations of the city's employment data, as reported to the EEOC on the EEO-4 form, which can show pay differences for state and local government workers by sex, race, and ethnicity.

According to AFSCME, the figures from the EEO-4 showed a high degree of sex segregation in the city. Female-dominated jobs, often requiring specific skills and a high school education, were paid, on average, about 12 to 15 percent less than male-dominated jobs without specific skill requirements.

The union launched an educational effort with the city's elected officials, including the City Council and the mayor. AFSCME advocated solving the pay equity problem by sitting down at the bargaining table and negotiating instead of litigating or using a consultant to conduct an exhaustive and expensive study.

In the end, the city agreed to open the contracts for librarians and clerical workers to negotiate pay equity increases. Beginning in 1985 and phasing in over a three-year period, members of these two bargaining units received raises that were 12-15 percent above the general pay raises. Approximately $12 million was allocated to 5,000 librarians and clerical workers. The clerical unit was predominantly Black and Hispanic.

## Los Angeles County (California)

Children's social workers employed by Los Angeles County -- who were mostly women -- were getting paid 34 percent less than County probation officers -- who were mostly men, even though their jobs required similar skill, effort, responsibility and had similar working conditions, according to a 1992 study. The Service Employees International Union's Local 535 pushed for pay equity increases, since the social workers were being paid about $35,000 per year, while probation officers were paid $55,000 per year.

"In the 1970's, when the job of social worker and probation officer were separated into different jobs, the pay difference was approximately one dollar. But by 1992, there was a thirty percent pay difference...so you can understand why getting pay equity increases was a major win for us.

From a financial perspective, we could finally function economically -- although we are going back to the bargaining table, because we are STILL thirteen percentage points below what the pay equity study said we could move to."

Annette Jeffries, a children's social worker with ten years experience<10>

## Santa Clara County (California)

"You get used to being underrated and underpaid, because traditionally that's how it has always been -- there hadn't been a lot of movement toward adjusting wages for women.

But when Santa Clara County conducted its study of county employees, every classification was looked at and even in the worst financial times, the county put money aside for pay equity. We worried that we would have to re-fight, if financial problems occurred, but the county considered pay equity a long-term financial obligation that they set money aside for.

I work as an employment technician and my classification got 18 percent raises over 10 installments. This adjustment raised my pay considerably and improved retention. Pay equity adjustments were made on top of other union-bargained adjustments. Now I'm making over $20 an hour.

It's not a short term thing. I've read about how underpaid women are traditionally and how the gap in what we're paid isn't going away. This gave me faith that something could happen, that there could actually be movement toward narrowing the pay gap between men and women."

Sharon Cathey, an employment technician for the last decade with Santa Clara County Government

Three thousand working women and people of color employed by Santa Clara County are now receiving the most current round of pay adjustments.<11> Social welfare workers, librarians and clerical workers received approximately $95 million dollars over the period 1985-1995. Overall, approximately 7,000 workers in 600 job classes were affected -- more than half of all county employees.

The agreement was supported by a coalition of 54 women's and civil rights organizations. These included the Women's Concerns Task Force (comprised of members of the board of supervisors, women's organizations, and women from labor organizations), the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and 13 other unions who bargained together to achieve pay equity raises.

## Join the Fair Pay Clearinghouse

## What Fair Pay Employers Can Do:

These are just a few of the hundreds of employers who have adapted their wage-setting practices so that female-dominated jobs are more fairly paid. The Fair Pay Clearinghouse is eager to include in its database all employers who have made wage adjustments to one or more predominantly female occupations in order to eliminate sex and race discrimination in wage- setting practices. If you are such an employer and you'd like to help others learn from your experience, please contact the Fair Pay Clearinghouse.

## What Resource Organizations Working on Fair Pay Can Do:

These resource organizations, including labor unions and women's groups, are only a few of the hundreds that have been working on fair pay and pay equity for many years. If you're a resource organization working on the issue of fair pay and would like to be a resource for others or if you know about such an organization, please contact the Fair Pay Clearinghouse.

## What Working Women Can Do:

The U.S. Department of Labor's Women's Bureau created the Fair Pay Clearinghouse to provide information to help working women and men, employers and other organizations "improve pay scales." You can call, write, or visit the Women's Bureau's website on the Internet to get:

o wage and occupation information on traditionally female jobs; how women of different races, ethnic origins, ages, and educational backgrounds are paid; how being represented by a union affects women's pay;

o resource organizations, including labor unions, associations in your occupation (like nurses or librarians), and business associations nationwide and in your state that are active on fair pay issues; and

o information on pay adjustments made by employers across the country and whether or not there is a fair pay law in your state that covers you.

One working woman might be easily overwhelmed by trying to convince an employer to implement fair pay practices by herself. **You are not alone. Other women have changed pay practices in "women's jobs" for the better -- and so can you.**

If you're a working woman, remember that contacting the Fair Pay Clearinghouse will give you the right tools to find out the facts, to know your rights, and to learn "what works" from pioneering efforts by organizations committed to working women.

**Contact the Women's Bureau's Fair Pay Clearinghouse at 1-800-347-3741. Or visit us at our Internet website: http://www.dol.gov/dol/wb/**

** ENDNOTES **

<1> "Pay Equity and the Wage Gap: Success in the States," Institute for Women's Policy Research, Washington, D.C.,p.5.

<2> The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), a labor union active in both the public and private sectors, publishes a brochure, "Pay Equity: The First Steps," that provides guidance on how to get started on the road to pay equity at your workplace. Available free, AFSCME, Washington, D.C.

<3> Kleiman, Carol. "Union negotiations pay off in number of pay-equity victories," *Chicago Tribune*, September 24, 1990, used courtesy of the *Chicago Tribune*.

<4>"Supplemental interview by Kathy Brennan, Women's Bureau, August 12, 1996.

<5>" Legislative Commission on the Economic Status of Women, 85 State Office Builidng, St. Paul, Minnesota, 55155, (612) 296-8590 or 1-800-657- 3949.

<6> Interview by Kathy Brennan, Women's Bureau, August 13 and 14, 1996.

<7> "Newsnotes," July, 1989, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 1, National Committee on Pay Equity, Washington, D.C.

<8> *Pay Equity: The Minnesota Experience*, p.5.

<9> Interview with Cheryl Parisi, AFSCME Council 36 Business representative, by Kathy Brennan, Women's Bureau, August 15, 1996.

<10> Interview by Kathy Brennan, Women's Bureau, August 15, 1996.

<11> *"Newsnotes,"* Winter, 1996, National Committee on Pay Equity, Washington, D.C.

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